

Message Text

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PAGE 01 NAHA 00129 230928Z

ACTION EA-12

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FM AMCONSUL NAHA

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INFO SECSTATE WASH DC 2593

CG MARCORB CAMP BUTLER

OAC CAMP BUTLER

CG THIRD MAF, CAMP COURTNEY

THIRD MARINE DIVISION

CG FIRST MAW, CAMP BUTLER

COMUSJAPAN YOKOTA AFB

CINCPAC CAMP SMITH HAWAII

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CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652. N/A

TAGS. MARR, JA

SUBJ. KOMEITO PRESENTS PROTEST ON TANK ROAD

1. KOMEITO DIETMAN TAMAKI ON MAR 22 CALLED ON CG TO PRESENT
PETITION REQUESTING TERMINATION OF MILITARY EXERCISES AT CAMP
HANSEN AND CAMP SCHWAB, HALT TO CONSTRUCTION OF "TANK ROAD"

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FULL COMPENSATION FOR DAMAGES ALREADY INCURRED, AND MEASURES
TO AVOID DAMAGE ANTICIPATED IN FUTURE. CG WAS ALSO GIVEN COPY OF
THREE PAGE REPORT DATED MAR 14 ON FINDINGS OF KOMEITO GROUP INCLUDING
TAMAKI WHICH RECENTLY VISITED TANK ROAD SITE. REPORT WAS ALONG
FAMILIAR LINES, ECHOING THEMES STRUCK BY OKINAWAN NEWS MEDIA AND
REFORMIST POLITICAL PARTIES OVER RECENT MONTHS. IN ADDITION TO
ALLEGING KOMEITO HAD CONFIRMED EXTENSIVE DAMAGE TO OKINAWAN
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FORESTRY AND WATER RESOURCES, REPORT CHARACTERIZED TANK ROAD AS
EXAMPLE OF INTENSIFICATION OF MILITARY EXERCISES AND BUILDUP OF
BASES ON OKINAWA, UNDERTAKEN BECAUSE OF INCREASING IMPORTANCE OF
BASES HERE AS US GROUND TROOPS ARE WITHDRAWN FROM KOREA AS
INDICATED BY SECDEF BROWN'S RECENT STATEMENT THAT OKINAWA-BASED
MARINES WOULD BE SENT TO KOREA WITHIN TWO DAYS IN EVENT OF
AGGRESSION AGAINST KOREA. REPORT ALSO ATTACKED ALLEGED ABSENCE

OF DELINEATED BOUNDARY LINES BETWEEN CAMP HANSEN AND CAMP SCHWAB AND UNCLEAR LEGAL STATUS OR PREFECTURAL HIGHWAY 108 WHICH CROSSES TANK ROAD.

2. CG EXPRESSED CONCERN AT WHAT US AUTHORITIES CONSIDERED TO BE GROSSLY EXAGGERATED AND LARGELY UNFOUNDED ACCOUNT OF TANK ROAD PROBLEM GIVEN BY THIS LATEST KOMEITO REPORT AND BY COVERAGE IN

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OKINAWA NEWS MEDIA AND REFORMIST POLITICAL PARTIES OVER THE MONTHS. CG POINTED OUT THAT TANK ROAD CONSTRUCTION WAS OLD PROJECT INITIATED ABOUT TWENTY YEARS AGO AND CONTINUED INTERMITTENTLY OVER THE YEARS AS MARINE PERSONNEL AND OTHER RESOURCES PERMITTED. MAJOR PURPOSE OF CONSTRUCTION PROJECT WAS TO REMOVE TANK AND OTHER MILITARY VEHICLE TRAFFIC FROM PUBLIC HIGHWAYS, WHICH WE WERE CONSCIOUS COULD CREATE INCONVENIENCES TO OKINAWAN PUBLIC. US AND GOJ AUTHORITIES CONCERNED HAD FORESEEN AND HAD BEEN CONCERNED AT POSSIBILITY OF DAMAGE TO ENVIRONMENT AND HAD BEEN WORKING CLOSELY TOGETHER ON COUNTER MEASURES, THANKS TO WHICH THERE HAS TO DATE BEEN NO ACTUAL CASE OF ANY CONTAMINATION OF WATER SUPPLIES AS GENERALLY ASSERTED BY OKINAWAN NEWS MEDIA. CG CONSIDERED MAIN PROBLEM, FOR WHICH HE PERSONALLY DID NOT KNOW A SOLUTION, TO BE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN METHOD OF CONSTRUCTION USED BY AMERICANS IN THIS KIND OF SITUATION AND CONSTRUCTION METHODS AND STANDARDS USED BY PRIVATE CONSTRUCTION FIRMS AND GOJ/OKINAWAN AUTHORITIES TO WHICH UNCLASSIFIED

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OKINAWANS HAVE BEEN ACCUSTOMED.

3. CG TOLD TAMAKI (AND HE AGREED) THAT QUESTION OF DELINEATION OF BOUNDARIES BETWEEN CAMP SCHWAB AND HANSEN AND QUESTION OF LEGAL STATUS AND DEGREE OF US VERSUS PREFECTURAL GOVERNMENT CONTROL OF

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PREFECTURAL HIGHWAY 108 (AND OF HIGHWAY 104 WHICH TAMAKI ALSO RAISED) WERE SUBJECTS TO BE ADDRESSED NOT BY US SIDE BUT BY GOJ, WHICH IS RESPONSIBLE FOR PROVIDING FACILITIES AND AREAS US FORCES REQUIRE.

4. TAMAKI SAID HE AND KOMEITO WERE NOT SO IRRESPONSIBLE AS TO ADVOCATE THE TERMINATION OF THE US/JAPAN MUTUAL SECURITY TREATY BUT THE KOMEITO FELT A RESPONSIBILITY TO CALL FOR CORRECTIVE ACTIONS IN SITUATIONS WHERE US MILITARY BASES IMPINGED ON LIVELIHOOD AND SAFETY ON OKINAWAN PEOPLE. CG REPLIED THAT US AUTHORITIES SHARE BASIC GOAL OF DESIRING TO MAINTAIN HARMONIOUS RELATIONS BETWEEN US FORCES AND OKINAWAN INHABITANTS, WHICH CG NOTED US FORCES HAVE ENJOYED FOR MANY YEARS IN NORTHERN OKINAWA, AND ARE CONTINUALLY STRIVING TO REMOVE ANY FRICTIONS, MISUNDERSTANDINGS AND CONCRETE PROBLEMS WHICH ARISE.

CG REITERATED HIS CONCERN OVER GAP IN UNDERSTANDING OF SITUATION
SUCH AS TANK ROAD AND URGED THAT KOMEITO JOIN IN EFFORTS TO FINE
PRACTICAL SOLUTIONS TO SPECIFIC PROBLEMS THAT WILL MAINTAIN
HARMONIOUS RELATIONS BETWEEN US FORCES AND OKINAWAN PEOPLE.
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